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THE Barkeſhire Lady's GARLAND

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GARLAND

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Philadelphia

Some verſes old-for them we drew
Theſe oldiſh cuts, though moſtly new.

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THE
Barkeſhire Lady's Garland:
IN FOUR PARTS.

PART I.

Showing Cupid's Conqueſt over a coy Lady of Five thouſand a year, &c.

PART II.

The Lady's Letter of a Challenge to fight him upon refuſing to wed her in a maſk, without knowing who ſhe was.

PART III.

How they met by appointment in a Grove, where ſhe obliged him to fight or wed her.

PART IV.

How they rode together in her Gilded Coach to her noble Seat or Caſtle.

PART I.

Showing Cupid's Conqueſt over a coy Lady of Five thouſand a year, &c.

BACHELORS of every Station,
Mark this ſtrange & trve relation,
Which in brief to you I bring:
Never was a Stranger thing.

YOU ſhall find it worth the hearing;
Loyal love is moſt endearing,
When it takes the deepeſt root,
Yielding charms & gold to boot.

Some will wed from loue of treaſure,
But the ſweeteſt joy & pleaſure
Is in faithful love you'll find,
Gracèd with a noble mind.

Such a noble diſpoſition
Had this Lady, with ſubmiſſion:
Of whom I this ſonnet write,
Store of wealth & beauty bright.

SHE had left by a good Grannum,
Full five thouſand povnds per annum,
Which ſhe held without control:
Thus ſhe did in riches roll.

Though ſhe had vaſt ſtores of riches,
Which ſome perſons much bewitches,
Yet ſhe bore a courteous mind—
Not the leaſt to pride inclin'd.

Many noble perſons courted
This young Lady, 'tis reported,
But their lab'ring proved in vain,
They could not her favour gain.

THOUGH ſhe made ſuch ſtrong reſiſtance,
Yet, by Cupid's kind aſſiſtance,
She was conquer'd after all:
How it was declare I ſhall.

Being at a noble wedding,
Near the famous Town of Redding,
A young gentleman ſhe ſaw,
Who belongèd to the Law.

As ſhe view'd his ſweet behaviour,
Every courteous carriage gave her
New additions to her grief:
Forc'd ſhe was to ſeek relief.

PRIVATELY ſhe then enquired
About him ſo much admired,
Both his name & where he dwelt:
Such was the hot flames ſhe felt.

Then at night this youthful Lady
Call'd her Coach, which being ready,
Homeward ſtraight ſhe did return,
But her heart in flames did burn.

PART II.

The Lady's Letter of a Challenge to fight him upon refuſing to wed her in a maſk, without knowing who ſhe was.

NIGHT & morning for a ſeaſon
In her cloſet ſhe would reason
With herſelf, & often ſaid—
Why has Love my heart betray'd?

I THAT have ſo many ſlighted,
Am at length ſo well requited,
For my griefs are not a few:
Now I find what Love can do.

He that has my heart in keeping,
Though I for his ſake be weeping,
Little knows what grief I feel,
But I'll try it out with ſteel.

For I will a challenge ſend him,
And appoint where I'll attend him:
In a grove without delay,
By the dawning of the day.

HE ſhall not the leaſt diſcover,
That I am a virgin lover,
By the challenge which I ſend:
But for juſtice I contend.

He has cauſed ſad diſtraction,
And I come for ſatisfaction,
Which if he denies to give,
One of us ſhall ceaſe to live.

Having thus her mind relievèd,
She her letter ſigned and ſealèd;
Now when it came to his hand,
The young man was at a ſtand.

IN her letter ſhe conjur'd him
For to meet, & well aſſur'd him,
Recompence he muſt afford,
Or diſpute it with his ſword.

Having read this ſtrange relation,
He was in a conſternation:
Then adviſing with his friend,
He perſuades him to attend.

Be of courage & make ready,
Faint Heart never won fair Lady,
In regard it muſt be ſo,
I along with you will go.

PART III.

How they met by appointment in a Grove, where ſhe obliged him to fight or wed her.

EARLY on a Summer's morning
When bright Phœbus was adorning
Every bouer with his beams,
The fair Lady came, it ſeems.

AT the bottom of the mountain,
Near a pleaſant cryſtal fountain,
There ſhe left her gilded coach,
While the Grove ſhe did approach.

Cover'd with a maſk, & walking,
There ſhe met her Lover talking
With a friend that he had brought,
Straight ſhe aſk'd him who he ſought.

I am challeng'd by a gallant,
Who reſolves to try my talent:
Who he is I cannot ſay,
But I hope to ſhow him play.

IT is I that did invite you,
You ſhall wed me or I'll fight you
Underneath thoſe ſpreading trees,
Therefore chooſe you which you pleaſe.

You will find I do not vapour,
I have brought my truſty rapier,
Therefore take your choice, ſays ſhe,
Either fight or marry me.

Said he, Madam, pray what mean you?
In my life I've never ſeen you:
Pray unmaſk—your viſage ſhow,
Then I'll tell you Aye or No.

I WILL not my face uncouver
Till the marriage ties are over,
Therefore, chooſe you which you will,
Wed me, Sir — or — try your ſkill.

Step within that pleaſant bower
With your friend one ſingle hour:
Strive your thoughts to reconcile,
And I'll wander here the while.

While this charming Lady waited,
The young bachelors debated
What was beſt for to be done:
Quoth his friend — the hazard run.

IF my judgement can be truſted,
Wed her firſt—you can't be worſted:
If ſhe's rich, you'll riſe to fame,
If ſhe's poor—why, you're the ſame.

He conſented to be married:
In her coach they all were carried
To a Church, without delay,
Where he weds the Lady gay.

The ſweet pretty Cupids hover'd
Round her eyes—her face was cover'd
With a maſk—he took her thus,
Juſt for better or for worſe.

WITH a courteous, kind behaviour
She preſents his friend a favour,
And withal diſmiſſ'd him ſtraight
That he might no longer wait.

PART IV.

How they rode together in her Gilded Coach to her noble Seat or Caſtle.

AS the gilded Coach ſtood ready,
The young lover & his Lady,
Rode together till they came,
To her houſe of ſtate and fame.

WHICH appeared like a Caſtle,
Where he might behold a parcel
Of young cedars, tall & ſtraight,
Juſt before her Palace gate.

Hand in hand they walk'd together,
To a hall, or parlour rather,
Which was beautiful & fair—
All alone ſhe left him there.

Two long hours there he waited
Her return—at length he fretted,
And began to grieve at laſt,
For he had not broke his faſt,

STILL he ſat like one amazèd,
Round a ſpacious room he gazèd
Which was richly beautified:
But, alas! he loſt his bride.

There was peeping, laughing, ſneering,
All within the Lawyer's hearing:
But his bride he could not ſee—
Would I were at home, thought he.

While his heart was melancholy,
Said the Steward, briſk & jolly,
Tell me, friend, how came you here?
You have ſome deſign, I fear.

HE reply'd — dear, loving maſter,
You ſhall meet with no diſaſter
Through my means, in any caſe —
Madam brought me to this place.

Then the Steward did retire,
Saying that he would enquire
Whether it was true or no:
Never was love hampered ſo.

Now the lady who had fill'd him
With thoſe fears, full well beheld him,
From a window where ſhe dreſt,
Pleasèd at the pleaſant jeſt.

WHEN ſhe had herſelf attir'd
In rich robes to be admired,
She appeared in his ſight
Like a moving angel bright.

Sir — my ſervants have related,
How you have ſome hours waited,
In my parlour — tell mé who
In my houſe you ever knew.

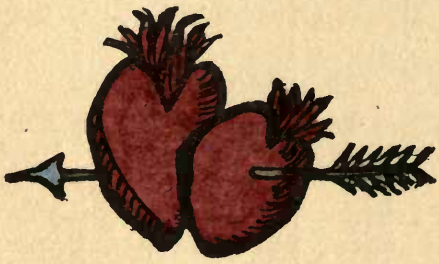
Madam — if I have offended,
It is more than I intended;
A young lady brought me here —
That is true, ſhe ſaid, my dear.

I CAN be no longer cruel
To my joy & only jewel —
Thou art mine, & I am thine,
Hand & heart I do reſign.

Once I was a wounded lover,
Now, theſe fears are fairly over
By receiving what I gave
Thou art Lord of all I have.

Beauty, honour, love & treaſure,
A rich, golden ſtream of pleaſure
With his Lady he enjoys —
Thanks to Cupid's kind decoys.

NOW he's clothed in fine attire,
Not inferior to a Squire:
Beauty, honour, riches, ſtore,
What can man deſire more?



NOTE.

This very curious and original tale, in part historical, is true. At least the incidents are facts.

The scene of the Ballad is laid in Whitley Park, in Berkshire, England, known as "The Abbot's Park, at the entrance of Reading Town" (Leland.)

As the story runs, William Kendrick, of Whitley Park, Armr., was knighted in 1679. He died in 1685. His only son, Sir Wm., succeeded him to the Baronetcy.

The latter died in 1699, leaving as his heir a daughter, the heroine of this Ballad.

She was married to Benj. Child, Esq., a young and handsome, but very poor, attorney of Reading. The wedding was solemnized in St. Mary's Church, the bride wearing a very thick veil.

In 1714 Child was made High Sheriff of Reading. Possibly ten years elapsed between the marriage and his holding of office, which he filled when he was about 32 years of age, for it cannot be supposed that he would have been elevated to such a high position so soon after his marriage from a previously obscure and humble personage.

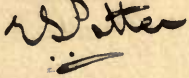
The earliest edition of the Ballad known is a broadside having a picture of Queen Anne, rudely cut, but apparently a fair likeness. The author is unknown. The Ballad was sung to the air of "The Royal Forester."

Somewhere there is a French version of the 16th century; this casts some doubt on its English origin.

Au reservoir

Here comes to a cloſe "The Berkſhire Lady's Garland," or a Merry tale of how Cupid conquer'th all. Now ſet up & adorn'd with ſtrange ſculptures, a few colour'd, engraven by many hands very curiouſly to look at.

This is No. 8 of one hundred on paper & three on ſheepſkin — the blocks ſince ſlaſhed. Emprynt'd under the hands of E. S. P., the Monk's Head, in Phila., Pa., this month of October, 1902.



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